

cuestión de la inscripción de aquel «boom» de publicaciones dentro del ingente esfuerzo hecho en España, entre 1917 y 1936, por crear una «nueva cultura».

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Leopoldo Alas (Clarín). *Clarín político*. 2 vols., ed. Yvan Lissorgues, Barcelona, Lumen, 1989, 505 and 248 pp.

*Clarín político* is the second edition of Yvan Lissorgues' well-received 1980-81 anthology, originally published by the Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail. It is a welcome addition to the now huge corpus of *clariniana*, for several reasons. First, the presentation of the texts has been much improved simply by appearing in the professionally prepared format that a press like Lumen can offer. Second, this edition should receive wider distribution with Lumen than the first. But third and most important, *Clarín político* represents a first-class compilation of largely inaccessible Clarín texts that originally appeared in the many newspapers and journals to which Alas contributed over a period of twenty-six years (1875-1901).

As Gonzalo Sobejano points out in a new prologue written for this edition (pp. 9-14), as late as 1899 Clarín thought of himself as principally a journalist. Certainly his productivity in this sub-genre is nothing short of astounding. He seems to have written an article every three or four days of his life, along with his novels, short stories, teaching, and other activities. By age forty-nine he had, not surprisingly, worn himself out. It is true of course that many of these writings are by nature ephemeral and dauntingly restricted in meaning for readers of today who do not know the cultural context surrounding the articles. But on the other hand, as scholars and readers of Clarín, we cannot afford to bypass any publication of a major writer as an aid in illuminating his creative wellsprings. We also need anthologies like *Clarín político* to help us understand the period itself. Moreover, as cultural studies continue to grow and to appear more and more attractive to Hispanist scholars, these writings become valuable sources for

investigating the political, social and economic axes around which literature and culture revolve and to which they contribute.

Lissorgues organizes his selection of Clarín materials around themes, which are, to some extent, presented chronologically. Each volume contains informative and well-documented analyses of Alas's ideological framework that set the articles within their contemporary context. Volume I, which begins with a long Introduction by Lissorgues (pp. 17-107), is divided into the following sections: 1. *política*; 2. *caracteres y costumbres del pueblo español*; 3. *centralismo y regionalismo*; 4. *la cuestión social*; 5. *las últimas colonias*; and 6. *regeneración*. Under the first heading the reader can find pieces on Cánovas, Alas's favorite political target; *el caciquismo*; corruption in politics; *el posibilismo* and Castelar. «Customs and character» includes diatribes against bullfighting, oddly ambivalent articles on women, writing and marriage, and a campaign against antisemitism. «Centralism and regionalism» contains discussions of Pi y Margall's *Las Nacionalidades*, González de Velasco's *Tipos y bocetos de la emigración asturiana*, the question of Cataluña's autonomy, and theorizing on nation, state and region. In the «Social question», Alas writes about the responsibilities and duties of the bourgeoisie, the masses, liberalism, socialism, hunger in Andalucía, and anarchism; in the «Last colonies», about Cuba, decadence and patriotism; and in «Regeneration», about the pressing problems of *fin del siglo* Spain and the need for moral and political reform.

Volume II is organized under three main headings: 1. *periodismo y cultura*; 2. *enseñanza y educación*; and 3. *literatura y sociedad*. Here, Lissorgues has written a separate introduction for each section. «Journalism and culture» gives examples of Clarín's ideas on the significance of being a journalist, the role of newspapers in society, and cultural backwardness in Spain. The second section contains some of Alas's most deeply held beliefs in the critical need for educational reform in Spain. In the last decade of his life, he became increasingly obsessed with the subject of education to the point of identifying it as the chief problem confronting Spain at the turn of the century. The last section —«Literature and society»— contains articles on Galdós's *La familia de León Roch*, Zola's *Pot-Bouille*, Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, and «el teatro político». The volume also includes a «Cuadro cronológico» and an «Índice bibliográfico de obras citadas». Omitted in this edition

is the «Índice Onomástico». Lissorgues also dropped from volume I, without explanation, a small «Palique» (from *El Día*, 3 Jan. 1882) and «La contribución», a story originally published in *Madrid Cómico* (4 Jan. 1896) and posthumously in *Siglo pasado* (1901).

An annoying feature of the first edition was the extremely dense foliage of a critical subtext, i.e., voluminous and numerous notes that distracted the reader's attention from the main text, in volume I. While it does not appear that Lissorgues has modified substantially this mass of notes in the present edition, at least the presentation of those notes is more attractive and more legible than before. Volume II does not suffer from the same problem. Another drawback found in the scholarly apparatus of this edition is the failure to update bibliographically and critically. An occasional reference to a new item such as publication of *Juan Ruiz*, Clarín's adolescent «periódico humorístico», can be found, but there is no real acknowledgment of the explosion of *clariniana* during the 1980s. Mention of such publications, for example, as David Torres' *Los prólogos de Leopoldo Alas* (1984), María José Tintoré's *"La Regenta" de Clarín y la crítica de su tiempo* (1987), Roger Utt's *Textos y contextos de Clarín: Los artículos de Leopoldo Alas en "El Porvenir" (Madrid, 1882)* (1988), Adolfo Sotelo Vázquez' *Leopoldo Alas y el fin de siglo* (1988), and the many pertinent articles on the subject, even if only as part of the bibliography or as addenda, would have helped. And it is jarring to read references to Laureano Bonet's 1972 selection of Zola texts, *El naturalismo*, or to Rubén Benítez' 1975 edition of Coloma's *Pequeñeces*, as «recently» published. There are also typographical errors and incomplete bibliographical references. Some editorial revisions should have been carried out. But these reservations aside, *Clarín político* is a solid contribution to Clarín studies and should be on every *clarinista's* and research library's shelf.

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